

THE GLENLYON REGION, SOME FACETS OF ITS HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

Following exploration of the area by A. Cunningham, and later by P. Leslie, the settlement of Glenlyon run from 1840 is followed in detail. Some of the history of Pike's Creek, Mingooola, and Texas runs is also included. The discovery and later exploration of the Glenlyon or Texas Caves is discussed. Reference is made to the early development of the tobacco growing industry at Glenlyon and Texas, in association with the formation of Texas town. The history of mining in the area is given with emphasis on the Silver Spur mine.

EXPLORATION

In 1827, botanist-explorer Allan Cunningham passed around the area of this study on his discovery trip to the Darling Downs (Russell 1888, pp.77-126; Hamilton 1961, pp. 323-42; and Steele 1972, pp. 215-24). Journeying north from Segenhoc, Cunningham and his party of six convicts crossed the river now known as the Dumaresq (named by him Macintyre Brook) near the present location of Beebo, west of Texas. He then passed northeast to the Darling Downs, around the area now occupied by Glenlyon Dam. On his return journey he came upon a stream which he believed to be his Dumaresq River. This, according to Hamilton (1961, p.335) is the Mole. He followed this northwest, and on 2 July, 1827, came to its junction with the present Dumaresq (or Severn) River. At this point he was almost in sight of the mouth of Pike Creek, on which Glenlyon Dam now stands. Cunningham followed the Dumaresq River until it changed direction towards Texas, then he turned south and left the area of interest.

Thirteen years elapsed before the next exploration of the area. Squatters gradually moved north through New South Wales to just south of the Queensland border. By 1840, two squatters, Garden and Bennett occupied one of the southern tributaries of the Dumaresq River. Russell (1888, pp. 164-71) quotes from information received from Patrick Leslie in 1878, which Leslie based on his own written records. Leslie and a convict servant, Peter Murphy, left Garden and Bennett's on 8 March, 1840. He

describes the first exploration of the Glenlyon Dam area:

'On the morning of the 14th of March, crossing the Severn River, we came on the junction of a large stream nearly opposite the junction of the Mole and Severn. This was afterwards called Pike's Creek. We followed this creek up a considerable distance (encamping several nights)'.

SQUATTERS

From 1840 on, exploration and development of the area was in the hands of the squatters. Government Gazettes listed some of the holders of licences to depasture stock beyond the limits of location, and later the holders of leases of Crown Land. Unfortunately, often the leaseholder was only involved financially, while someone else worked the property. More detail can sometimes be found in reports of the Commissioners of Crown Lands, held in the State Archives. Another major source of information is the published reminiscences of those actually working the properties (e.g. De Satgé, 1901, and Gunn, 1937).

GLENLYON, EARLY HISTORY

The original holdings of the Glenlyon run encompass most of the present Dam area. Early references give the name as Glen Lyon, probably after the glen in Perth, Scotland (the Times Atlas 1967, p. 92). Glenlyon was taken up by Archibald Garden on 17 July 1840, and he held a licence to depasture stock on Glenlyon until mid 1844 (Archives Office, N.S.W., ref. 4/91-108, 4/112)

with licence numbers 40/158, 41/681, 42/766 and 43/60. His licence to depasture, without the name of the run, was published in the New South Wales Government Gazette (1840 and 1843). From the Archives Office of New South Wales (ref: X816) the Commissioner of Crown Lands, George James MacDonald, provided a description of Glenlyon dated 26–27 February 1841, which indicates that Glenlyon was held and worked by A. Garden, with one hut, nine residents, ten cattle, one horse, 3000 sheep; It extended for ten miles and was six miles from the nearest adjoining Station.

As there is no trace of a depasturing licence in Garden's name for 1844, it seems likely that the property was vacant when Alexander McLeod (Plate 1A) and his family, with his son-in-law Richard Wright (Plate 1B), arrived in search of land. In the book 'Terrica Inglewood Queensland', (Anon, n.d.) which was probably based on information supplied by Roderick McLeod, one of Alexander's sons, it is stated that '... they camped about seven miles from Mingoola, in the vicinity of Glen Lyon, which place they later took up'. Scott McLeod Walker, the present owner of Glenlyon and a great grandson of Alexander McLeod indicated (Walker, pers. comm. 1975) that Roderick, who would have been a teenager when they arrived on Glenlyon, recounted that the first campsite was on the creek flat in front of the cave now known as Main Viator Cave, where they grew grain for bread, probably the first agricultural endeavour in the area.

A depasturing licence was taken out on 8 November 1844 (Harslett and Royle 1972, p.13), in the names of Alexander McLeod and Richard Wright. Alexander remained on Glenlyon for about a year after which time the property was worked by his eldest son Donald and Richard Wright, until Alexander returned some years later ('Terrica Inglewood Queensland').

In the N.S.W. Government Gazette (1849, 2, p.1212) Glenlyon is described as follows:

'No. 129. McLeod and Wright; Name of Run — Glen Lyon; Estimated Area -- 38,400 Acres; Estimated Grazing Capabilities — 12,000 Cattle.

'The Glen Lyon run is 10 miles long and 6 miles broad, there is about one third of it of little use, it being a stoney and ridgy country, it is bounded on the north by an understood boundary line between Mr. Trevethan's Station, and the Glen Lyon Station; on the east by the dividing range between Pike's Creek and the River Sovereign; said range running to the turn of said creek, and under the junction of a small branch of a creek, on the opposite side called the Little Plain or the Oakley Creek, where there is a marked tree line; and on the south and west from the said marked tree, and

by a dividing range running between the Glen Lyon Station, and the River Sovereign to the head of the McIntyre Brook.'

PIKE'S CREEK

There is a local legend reported by Gunn (1937, pp. 77–8) and supported by Howarth (1957), that W. B. Fitz, manager for Captain Pike, of Pikedale is supposed to have stolen Pike's Creek by cutting down the marked trees on the Glenlyon boundary and marking new boundaries north and south to define Pike's Creek. Gunn suggests this must have been about 1859. Howarth quotes an 1850 Crown Lands Commissioners description of Pikedale as indicating the original boundary.

Although an interesting anecdote, there is little else to support the legend. Reference to Mr. Trevethan's Station noted above, and the fact that in the N.S.W. Government Gazette (1847, 1, p. 574) Pike's Creek is stated to be leased by Ewen Campbell and in 1848 (N.S.W. Government Gazette 1848) by A. Trevethan, together with the fact that in 1852 A. Trevethan transferred the lease of Pike's Creek to Captain John Pike (N.S.W. Government Gazette 1852), all tend to contradict the legend. These references all indicate that Pike's Creek was taken up by 1847, and there is no evidence of Fitz holding a depasturing licence before 1847, nor is there any official indication of boundary disputes with Pikedale or Glenlyon. Pike's Creek was named after Captain John Pike of Pikedale Station, according to Place Names Board records.

MINGOOLA

Another run adjoining Glenlyon is Mingoola (also spelt Mangola or Mengoola). The present Glenlyon Dam wall lies close to the original boundary between Glenlyn and Mingoola. Mingoola was probably taken up in 1840 but the first published record found is in the N.S.W. Government Gazette (1845) when the licence was held by William Morgan. At some stage the lease was transferred to S. A. Donaldson, and in 1854 F. R. Chester Master purchased both Mingoola from Donaldson, and Glenlyon from McLeod and Wright (N.S.W. Government Gazette 1854). Alexander McLeod subsequently moved to Gladfield run near Singleton (Anon, n.d.) while Richard Wright, his wife, and large family moved to Ipswich (Ware 1971).

GLENLYON, DEVELOPMENT

Oscar De Satgé worked on both Mingoola and Glenlyon during 1855 and recorded his experiences (De Satgé 1901, pp. 42-52). Mingoola was the headquarters of operations, running only cattle, while Glenlyon ran sheep. Glenlyon was still at this time 'in the rough'. The sheep overseers were Headley and Dunlop, two Scotsmen. There were yards for lambing sheep, the sheep were washed under primitive conditions prior to shearing which took place on rough slabs under a bark roof. Few capital developments had been made to Glenlyon at this time. Exactly when Chester Master sold his lease is unknown, but in April 1859, a transfer occurred from the Bank of New South Wales to A. Walker (N.S.W. Government Gazette 1859).

From available records (Queensland State Archives CLO/13 and LAN N69) A. Walker transferred the lease to Henry Davis in 1861. Davis mortgaged to Edward Lotze and James M. Larnach whose names appear on the lease for 1861. In 1862 there is a transfer back to Davis, then to Alex Heywood Richardson. In 1868 the lease went to the Australian Joint Stock Bank of Sydney although Davis was still working the property at this time (Official Post Office Directory 1868). In 1871 the lease was taken by Thomas Walker. From discussion with Scott Walker, it seems that Henry Davis probably worked Glenlyon throughout 1861-71. He was certainly responsible for building the fine home (Plate 2A) still occupied by the owners of Glenlyon. The results of the Census of 1871 give an indication of the great development at Glenlyon under Davis (Votes and Proceedings 1872) when there were twenty-three dwellings, and a population of sixty-one, including twenty females.

Financed by Thomas Walker, Glenlyon was worked by William Henry Walker and H. S. Harden until W. H. Walker pulled out in 1877.* In January 1876, Glenlyon was divided into two runs; Glenlyon in the north and Emu Vale in the south. This was necessary to conform to the legal requirement that no single run should have an area of more than 100 square miles, whereas at that time the total Glenlyon run was estimated at 161 square miles (Queensland State Archives M173.421/26 and LAN N69).

Harden continued to work Glenlyon after 1877. Under the Crown Lands Act of 1884, the two adjoining runs had to be consolidated, again as Glenlyon. In 1886, the southern section was resumed for closer settlement, while Thomas

Walker retained 77 square miles in the north, as Glenlyon (Queensland State Archives LAN N69).

Donald Gunn worked Glenlyon (Gunn 1937, p. 88). He was certainly residing there on 2 January 1886, when he was listed as a Justice of the Peace (Queensland Government Gazette 1886). The lease remained in the name of Thomas Walker until his death in September 1886. The lease was then held by his executors J. T. Walker, Joanne Walker and A. Archer, until its transfer to Anna Sophia Gunn and Donald Gunn on 25 February 1890, and on 26 August, 1890 the lease was transferred to H. L., W. E., A. G. and V. M. White of Scone (Queensland State Archives LAN/AF 203). Samuel Cobb managed Glenlyon for the Whites. The Cobb family believe that he may have initially been in partnership with the Whites (Cobb 1975). There was further improvement made to Glenlyon in this period. The new twenty-stand shearing shed, still standing in 1976, was built about 1892 (Walker, pers. comm. 1976), and the records of the Department of Education indicate that Glenlyon school opened officially on 1 May 1899, further lessening the hardship of the pioneering life.

In August 1900 the lease on Glenlyon was transferred to Roderick McLeod (Plate 1c) thus returning the run to the family that came there originally in 1844. The run was managed by W. Donovan until 1908 (Walker pers. comm. 1976) when Roderick's daughter Enid married and the run was transferred to her. Further areas were resumed from Glenlyon in 1902 and 1907 (Queensland State Archives LAN/AF 203). In 1939 Scott McLeod Walker took over Glenlyon, and still works it today, from the home built by Davis in the 1860s.

The most recent resumptions from Glenlyon were those required for the new Dam. It is ironic that, because Glenlyon is above the Dam, it lost its irrigation licence on completion of the Dam, which is aimed at providing irrigation, but only for holdings downstream from the dam.

CAVES

Public interest in the Glenlyon Dam project was aroused particularly because of the limestone caves in the area to be flooded by the Dam.

Although the caves are in the tribal area of the Kambawal (Tindale 1974, pp. 173-4) there is no

* Womens Historical Association, plaque on Glenlyon homestead, 1966.

known evidence of aboriginal use of the caves. Two of the major caves were certainly known to the McLeod's after their arrival in 1844 (Walker, pers. comm. 1975). Since that time, the caves, locally referred to as Glenlyon Caves, were visited occasionally by local residents for picnics. A selection of signatures and dates recorded from the walls of Main Viator Cave (Grimes, pers. comm. 1976) includes the earliest discernable entry 'George Green 1892'. Other notable names include 'D. D. Gunn 1908', and the Jeffrey family in 1924. The Jeffreys held the lease on Mingoola from 1874 (Jeffrey 1975).

Detailed knowledge of the caves was gathered through the activities of the University of Queensland Speleological Society (Formed in 1960, Bourke 1970, although exploratory trips had been made in 1959, Bourke 1969). The first major exploration of the caves in the area occurred in August 1961, and since that time, scientific and mapping trips have continued. The Queensland Museum's Geologist accompanied one of these trips. The caves were given names. Main Viator Cave was named after the run which was selected from the resumed part of Glenlyon, as Grazing Farm No. 151, by F. D. C. Gore in June 1888 (Queensland State Archives, M173. 421/26). The name Viator was not applied until C. F. Walker took over the lease in 1926 and changed the name from The Glen (Queensland State Archives, LAN/DF 4365D). The Glenlyon System was named after Glenlyon run. In August 1967, a third major cave was discovered. Its first entry (VR-2) was dug out by hand by H. Shannon, R. M. Bourke and Margot Greenhalgh. Its discovery '... transformed Texas from a minor caving area into one worth fighting for' (Bourke 1975). The new cave was named Russenden Cave after Grazing Homestead 3630, taken from Glenlyon's holdings in the late 1940s by E. and F. M. Filmer (Walker, pers. comm. 1976).

Press announcement of the Pike Creek Dam project started a strong move by the Speleologists for the conservation of the caves. This culminated in the publication of 'The Case against the Pike Creek Dam' (U.Q.S.S. 1973). Mapping and study of the caves continued, and after the temporary flooding in February 1976, several new areas opened by the water in Main Viator Cave were mapped (Shannon 1976). On 23-24 October 1976 the Society visited the Caves, by canoe. Main Viator was flooded but Russenden was still dry (U.Q.S.S. 1976). By March 1977, the water was up to the ceiling of Russenden's main chamber (Shannon 1977).

TOBACCO

Apart from early mention of graingrowing on Glenlyon, Scott Walker recalled (pers. comm.) that until the 1950's traces of the buildings used by Chinese tobacco growers could be seen across Pike Creek from Glenlyon homestead. These were believed to date from the 1890s. Texas has been the centre of the local tobacco industry for many years, but the earliest history of this industry is still under study by the Texas Historical Society, who have so far traced the industry back to 1876-7 (Glassen 1976).

Muir (1969-71, p.8) states (without quoting a source) that '... by 1865 tobacco cultivation had spread from Tamworth in northern New South Wales to Texas in Queensland.' It seems more likely that Chinese miners, who came to the Stanthorpe area as early as 1872, turned to tobacco growing and spread the activity throughout the region (Wadham 1967, pp.109-10; Harslett and Royle 1972, pp.43, 69).

The town of Texas took its name from the Texas run. By October 1840 (Russell 1888, p.197) John McDougal had a run on the Severn, and in 1847 he is listed as holding a licence to depasture on Texas run (N.S.W. Government Gazette 1847, p.576), probably the same run. Texas town was surveyed under instructions dated October 1875 (Lands Department Map). In Baillier's Queensland Gazetteer (Whitworth 1876, p.185) Texas is described as having, '... no mills nor manufacturers ...' and '... land suitable for agriculture in the neighbourhood, but it is not yet open for selection'. A copy of a report, held by the Texas Historical Society (Ross 1886) shows that by then 100 acres were under tobacco and Mr Edgar Greenup operated a tobacco factory.

Agricultural activities were listed in Votes and Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament. The earliest reports for Texas may be included in the Inglewood District (Queensland Government Gazette 1873), for which tobacco is first mentioned in 1881 (Votes and Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament 1882). Texas is listed separately for the first time in 1896, with 482 acres under tobacco (Votes and Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament 1897).

At this time the Government regarded the industry as of sufficient importance to appoint Mr R. S. Neville as Tobacco Expert to the Department of Agriculture (Queensland Agricultural Journal 1897). In 1901 Mr Neville established a temporary State Tobacco Farm at Texas (Queensland Agricultural Journal 1901).

A letter from Mr Stephen H. Jennings (Jennings 1972) indicates that the company he worked for, W. D. and H. O. Wills, built a tobacco handling shed in Texas about 1907 to take leaf produced by Chinese growers. This was converted to a Stemmary in 1908–9 and closed down about 1916–17. This work was managed by Jennings's father. In 1909–10 an area named 'Raleigh' was leased by W. D. and H. O. Wills and a village built to accommodate English immigrants sponsored by the company through the Queensland Government. Crops of tobacco were planted in three seasons from 1911 to 1914, but lack of farming experienced by the immigrants, coupled with tobacco diseases and poor seasons led to the failure of this unusual experiment in sponsored migration.

Probably because of the war, by 1918 the area under tobacco in the whole Inglewood-Texas area was only 172 acres, largely in the hands of the Chinese (Queensland Journal of Agriculture 1920). Since then the fortunes of this industry have continued to fluctuate, gradually moving into the hands of European and Australian growers.

MINING

Apart from the State Arsenic Mine at Jibbenbar, which operated from 1918 until about 1930 providing prickly pear poison (Harslett and Royle 1972, p. 49), the only other major mining venture was at Silver Spur. Other deposits of copper, silver etc. were located at a number of sites and some were worked briefly (Skertchly 1898; Ball 1904; and Robertson 1972). In 1888 copper was found on Glenlyon itself but no major working of the deposit appears to have occurred (Department of Mines 1888).

The reports by Skertchly, Ball and Robertson cited above and reports by Saint-Smith (1913) and Ball (1918) provide some brief history of the discovery of the Silver Spur mine and much of its complex geology. The most complete history of the mine was published in the Stanthorpe Border Post (1925) in a series of at least four unsigned articles from 11 December 1925. Two of these articles (11 December and 31 December 1925) have survived in the hands of Mrs L. Boyce of Toowoomba. Her father Edgar Hall was the driving force behind Silver Spur mine and was almost certainly the author of the newspaper articles.

The ore deposit was discovered by a fencing contractor, John White, through surface traces of copper ore, and a syndicate was formed with

operators of the nearby Texas Copper Mining and Smelting Company mine, who arranged for a Mr Valentine to sink an exploratory shaft. Very little copper ore was found and work was abandoned.

Mr Dodgson, editor of the Border Post, on a visit from Stanthorpe inspected Valentine's shaft and, on his advice, a sample of the ore was sent to Messrs Stokes and Hall in Brisbane for assay. The assay indicated over 200 ounces of silver to the ton.

As the copper syndicate abandoned work, the claim was 'jumped' and a lease applied for and granted to John Quinn. This was Mineral Lease No. 54 taken out on 1 October 1892 (Queensland State Archives MIN/05). Pressure from members of the original syndicate resulted in the formation of a new group under Mr C. N. McKenny, Manager of the Texas run.

Edgar Hall was asked to advise on the mine and visited the site in November 1892. During that visit, McKenny, a keen horseman, suggested the name Silver Spur for the mine. Little work was done by the new group and Edgar Hall was given the option to work the mine, which he took over on 1 May 1893. He had the help, until 1902, of his partner in the Brisbane assay firm, Mr H. G. Stokes, whose work as Mine Manager was highly praised by the Government Geologist, S. B. J. Skertchly (1898, pp. 88–9). The mine (Plate 2B) was in almost continuous operation from 1893 until 1913. During this period 94,000 tons of ore were treated, yielding 2,100,000 ounces of silver, 4208 ounces of gold and some lead and copper.

Transport of equipment and products, as well as the complex nature of the deposit and ore, was a problem. According to Mrs Boyce, the company offered to pay for a railway branch line from the South-Western Railway. Parliament passed a Bill authorising construction of the line by the State, in 1914 (Ball 1918, p. 153). Unfortunately this was not carried out. A line was eventually built, in 1930, to Texas (John Oxley Library). The mine worked intermittently between 1916 and 1926 (Robertson 1972, pp.20–1) but in the 1930s the company was wound up (Boyce, pers. comm. 1976). Since then others have taken an interest in the area. A trial shipment of 159 tons of ore in 1952 yielded 31 ounces of gold and 9,329 ounces of silver (Robertson 1972, pp. 20–1). More recently, in 1975 Mount Carrington Mines Ltd. were investigating the area. At its peak, Silver Spur was a significant town (Plate 2C) with a school and later a church, but now few buildings remain.

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PLATE I

- FIG. A: Alexander McLeod, lessee of Glenlyon 1844–54.
FIG. B: Richard and Ann (McLeod) Wright. Six of Ann's thirteen children were probably born on Glenlyon. These were the pioneers.
FIG. C: Roderick McLeod, son of Alexander, purchased back Glenlyon in 1900.



PLATE 2

FIG. A: Glenlyon homestead before 1900.

FIG. B: First smelter at Silver Spur 1894.

FIG. C: Silver Spur from the northeast *c.* 1911.



